

A L F R E D
THE GREAT;
DELIVERER
OF HIS
C O U N T R Y.
A
T R A G E D Y.

Iustum & tenacem propositi Virum. HOR.

By the AUTHOR of the FRIENDLY RIVALS.

L O N D O N :

Printed for the Author, and Sold by *M. Mechell*, at the
King's-Arms, Fleet-street.

MDCCLIII.



2 219
Engl. Thirt. 84
PROLOGUE.

To be spoken by **ETHELWARD** in a Scho-
 lar's Gown and Cap.

BRITONS to Night; We shew that to retreat
 And temporise, once made a Monarch great.
 The noble Mind can never feel Distress,
 Like that of wanting Pow'r in Pomp of Dress;
 The wanting Wealth, to serve his Friends and
 Or wanting Friends 'mongst them he us'd to
 To a great Soul, prodigious Evils are,
 If in his native Pomp, he must appear:
 But if he can withdraw, and keep unknown
 To all but one, he can depend upon,
 To watch his Enemies, observe his Friends,
 And constantly advise, of all that tends
 To his Advantage—If he's brave and wise,
 May rise a Time more gloriously to rise.

We likewise shew a fair one in Distress,
 Somewhat in lower Life, a Shopkeeper's
 Drove from her Father's House, where to go
 But as her Fancy, led her to her Woe.
 She wisely chose to seek her Fortune and Great;
 Most were so thin, and some (I see) so yet;
 Upon her Journey, than I to have a Dread,
 Which without Doubt her Passions might inflame:
 But waking soon her real Love, she d
 Which by the Great and Good, soon restor
 She told 'em all the Grief with in her Breast,
 By them was entertain'd, and much less'd;
 Was entertain'd, for Innocence and Truth;
 But pleasing Dreams are but in Youth:
 A graceful Prince, enamour'd with her Charms,
 Professes, vows, and takes her to his Arms
 To both these Lovers, surely, Praise is due
 She places Confidence, and it was true,
 So is our Bard, exactly true to Story,
 Which makes him venture, thus to lay before ye
 Two Instances, where Merit was prefer'd;
 We trust, that this may be the third.

Dramatis

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Alfred, King of the *West Saxons*.

Edmund,
Edward, } his Sons.
Ethelward

Odda, Earl of *Devon*.

Ethelred, Earl of *Kens*, afterwards Viceroy of *Me*
Gregour, King of the *Scots*.

Madoc, King of *South Wales*.

Dunulf, a Neatherd in the Isle of *Athelney*.

Ivar,
Hubba, } Brothers, Generals of the *Danes*.
Halsdene,

Guthurm, *Hubba*'s Lieutenant-General.

Godrun,
Oscytel, } Captains of the *Danish* Cavalry.
Anand,

W O M E N.

Alswitha, Wife of *Alfred*.

Eystla, their Daughter.

Augurtha, Wife of *Odda*.

Egwina, a Shepherdess, Daughter of *Afwald*.

Maliba, Wife to *Dunulf*.

BRITANNIA.

Trumpets, Officers, Guards, and Attendants.

ALFRED



ALFRED the Great;

DELIVERER of his COUNTRY.


ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Danish Camp, near Wilton, on Salisbury-Plain.

*Their famous Standard Reasan, or the Raven before the
Generals Tent.*

*Enter Ivar and Hubba, with Godrun, Anand, and
other Officers.*

Ivar. ROTHER, once more, our Standard's
fix'd in *Wessex*:

The Battle newly won gives me great
Hopes,

We may maintain our Ground, 'till reinforce'd.

Hubba. The Victory, was dearly bought.

Ivar. 'Tis true, our Ranks are thin'd; but yet, I hope
Our keeping of the Field, proves beyond Doubt,
We gain'd the Day.

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Hubba.

Hubba. Had *Alfred's* Self been there, and we been Victors,

It might have then been a decisive Battle.

Ivar. The other half of *England* being ours,
He will not dare to leave his Skirts ungarded ;
And by our Vessels we may be recruited,
Before he possibly can march against us :
Besides, the *English* may perhaps Mistrust
Their new King's Conduct, tho' they can't his Courage.

Hub. *Guthurm*, from the East Angles, by my Orders
Will be inform'd, if he draws Strength from *Kent*,
And soon molest him ; but we can only hope
To be supply'd by Sea : Tho' *Halfdene* is far off,
Possibly he may spare us some Men.

Godrum. I was in Pain for *Ofcytel* ———
——— but here he comes.

Anand. His Haste, I hope, brings us good News.

Enter Ofcytel.

Ofcytel. The Gods protect our Generals and Forces :
Our Raven droops his Head ; and well he may,
For *Alfred*, with surprising Expedition,
Has got together, a prodigious Army,
And is but a few Miles off.

Ivar. Sooner shou'd you been here to give us Notice ;
——— Thy Life, shall answer thy Neglect.

Ofc. Hear me, good General, 'twas with great Hazard
Of Life, I'm here, to let you know it now ;
You having order'd me with my light Horse
To observe and follow a retreating Party,
And to find out their general Retirement :
Till they pass'd *Burcomb, Cumpston, Sutton, Austic*,
They seem'd to shun me ; then, in the narrow Way
They

Deliverer of his Country.

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They stopp'd, and cry'd, Huzza! We have ye now;
And instantly behind us, Trumpets sounded:
Finding our Danger in our Rear, we forc'd
Through our Decoyers, but lost half our Number
In our Retreat; and crossing of the *Nadder*,
They push'd us quite to *Hyndon*; where we learnt
That the main Body, with *Alfred* at their Head,
Was marching all last Night from *Shaftsbury*.

Hubba. Though his Brother's Obsequies kept him at
Winbourn,

I find, if we had not attack'd his Son
To-day, they'd join'd, and been our over-Match.

Osc. He is so now, or I am misinform'd.

[*A Trumpet sounds.*]

Ivar. A single Trumpet! *Anand* inquire his Message.

[*Exit Anand.*]

Hub. I wish they are not nearer than we think 'em.

Re-enter Anand.

Anand. Safe Conduct, for the Earl of *Kent*'s demanded?

Ivar. We grant it: Do you conduct him hither?

[*Exit. Anand.*]

Godrum. I know his Valour, for his Scars I bear.

Enter Anand and Ethelred.

Ethel. Thus says my Royal Master, *Alfred*, to you
If you have any Injuries to complain of,
You need but name 'em, they shall be redress'd,
And no more Blood be shed? but if you mean,
To wrest his Kingdom from him by your Arms;
He sends by me Defiance, quit *Wessow* instantly,
Or he'll drive you out, and follow you thro' *England*.

A 4

Ivar.

ALFRED the GREAT;

Ivar. We fully have reveng'd the Wrongs were
done us;

And thus to *Alfred*, you may give our Answer;
If he will swear by what he deems most Holy,
Not to pursue, or afterwards molest us
In any of our other Settlements;
Wessex we'll quite, and never enter more:
To which we all will swear by our good Arms,
If he will meet us here with peaceable Intent.

[*Exit Ethelred. Trumpet sounding.*

Oscytel. [*Apart to Godrum.*] Our General may make
what Peace he pleases;

But I'm resolved to be reveng'd on th' Horse
That late pursu'd me, in which you shall help,
And share with me, the Plunder we may get.

Godrum. [*Apart to Oscytel.*] I will; but we must
swear, else they'll suspect us:

Try *Anand*, if he'll join us: we'll afterwards
Strike some bold Stroke, and set up for ourselves.

Hubba. I see 'em coming; they have twice our
Number: [*Trumpets sound.*

But by the Olive Wreaths, about their Trumpets,
I see they give us Peace.

Enter Alfred, his three Sons and Ethelred.

Alf.——Halt; give the Word—halt—halt—halt.

Actions in Peace or War, shew what Men are;

And Words can only fix, what they should be:

Peace, I prefer, when honourably offer'd,

And scorn Advantage—To shed human Blood

Am never willing, but when forc'd by Insults;

So now I swear, and every one of us,

[*The English touch a Box of Relicts.*

Who

Deliverer of his Country.

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Who touch these holy Relicks, do engage
Not to molest, or cause ye be molested,
In any of your Settlements: On this Condition,
You this my Kingdom quit, and never more
Let *Dane* set Foot here in, without Permission
Of me or my Successors.

Ivar. And, by our Arms, we every of us swear

[*The Danes lay their Hands upon their Arms.*]

We will depart from *Wessex* instantly,
And never more shall any of our *Danes*
Set Foot in this your Kingdom, without Leave
From you, King *Alfred*, or from your Successors,
But what we'll punish;—so that you never more
Molest, or cause us in our Settlements,
Or any of them, to be molested.

Alf. Our Hands we'll join, in Token of this Peace;

[*The five on each Side join Hands.*]

And may the Powers we serve (if e'er 'tis broke)

[*Trumpets flourish.*]

Prosper the Arms, of them who keep it best.

[*Exeunt. A separate March.*]

SCENE changes to the Outside of a Cottage in
the Isle of Athelney.

Maliba, with a *Distaff* in her Hand, pushing out of the
Cottage-Door.

Egwina, neatly dress'd like a *Shepherdes* with a *Crook*
and *Pouch*, and a small *Bundle*.

Maliba. Go, get you hence, I say;
You do not earn, the *Victuals* that you eat.

Egw.

Egw. Pray let me stay, 'till I can see my Father.

Mal. Your Father will not be at home till Night;
But charg'd me, send you hence, e'er he return'd,
He won't, he can't, support you in your Pride:
Here take this Purse; he bid me give it you

[Gives her a Purse of Silver.]

To buy you Food, 'till you can get a Service;
But dare not see him, 'till you are provided.

[Exit. into the Cottage, bolting the Door.]

Egw. —What shall I do?—

My own dear Mother, never us'd me thus:
When I have tended Father's Sheep 'till Noon,
She'll scarce allow me Food; then makes me spin
Two Hours after Father's gone to Bed:
He calls me up right early; I've no Time
To make or mend, but when I'm with the Flock:
And now, because he's giv'n me a new Habit,
She calls me proud, and turns me out of Doors,
And he dare not controul her, else why this Purse!
'Though banish'd from his Sight, I'll ever love him:
Where shall I go?—they say my Lady Devon
Is truly charitable;—she perhaps
May take me in her Service:—this Needle-work,

[Pulling out a Sampler.]

My Mother taught me, must now recommend me:
Dulverton is far off;—but I may reach it
Before To-morrow Noon:—if I can get
To *Cothelston* To-night, so far, I know my Way. *[Exit.]*



SCENE

SCENE *changes to the Danish Camp near Ambersbury in Wiltshire.*

Enter Ivar, Hubba, and Officers.

Ivar. Now Brother, I hope, you will have Time to improve

And cultivate our Settlements : As for me, I chuse to return to *Denmark* ; but will be ready, When e're you want it, to bring you Assistance.

Hub. *Alfred* is reckon'd faithful, as he's valiant ; And therefore, whilst he lives, this Peace may hold :

[Trumpets sound.

But hark ! what Trumpets these ?

They're on our Left, and therefore must be Friends.

Enter Guthurm with Officers.

'Tis *Guthurm* :—How left you the East Angles ?

Guth. Their Coast, I have left well guarded ;— But being informed from *Kent*, that *Ethelred* Their valiant Earl, had led away their Horse ; And those of *Sussex*, to make Head against you, I thought you'd want me, as you'd had a Battle, And lost more Men than they, tho' I understood You kept the Field ?

Ivar. We did ; but had we not struck up a Peace, This Morning wi' em, th' Odds had been against us ; We thank you, ne'ertheless, you cou'd n't been here sooner.

Hub. Now *Guthurm's* come ; we'll leave him the Command, That I may see you safe embark'd at *Bristol*.

Ivar. Brother, that must not be, 'twill not be safe ; You shall not leave the Troops, while they're in *Wessex* ; For *Guthurm* has not sworn, to keep the Peace.

Hub. But they'll not venture, to attack him now ; And I can trust to him, he will not break it.

Ivar.

12 ALFRED the GREAT;

Ivar. As we must part, it may as well be here:
 [Embracing Hubba.] Dear Brother, fare you well; my
 Love to *Halfdene*:

The Gods protect you both.

Hub. If we e'er meet again, may it be in Love,
 [Embracing *Ivar.*] As now we part: — Farewell, dear
 Brother. [Exeunt, severally attended.]

SCENE changes to the Court at Winchester.

Enter Queen *Alswitha*, and *Elfreda* her Daughter.

Elfr. Does not your Majesty, expect the King
 My Father, and my Brothers back to-night?
 The Fun'ral Rites were over yester Morn.

Q. Alf. Alas, my dear! I can't so soon expect them,
 The cruel *Danes* prevent that Happiness:
 They'll force your Father to another Battle,
 And we can only pray for his Success.

Elfr. When had your Majesty, Advice of this?
 None of our People, have return'd from *Winbourn*.

Q. Alf. You saw the Earl of *Kent* here, yester
 Morn;

He had a short Discourse with me in private;
 In which he told me, he'd Advice thro' *Surry*,
Hubba, had by long Marches joined *Ivar*:
 And being superior to your Brother *Edmund*,
 They had attack'd and forc'd him out of *Wiltshire*.

Elfreda. I wonder'd at the Shortness of his Stay;
 For *Ethelred*, did use to tarry longer;
 But did not chuse to ask at all about it,
 Least you might think I wanted to detain him.

Q. Alf.

Q. Alfw. Neither did I chuse to acquaint you of it,
Least you shou'd madly hasten into Danger,
As once you did before——He wou'd have stay'd;
But on his Speed depended all our Safeties:
For all the Horse that he could raise in *Sussex*,
And some from *Kent*, were on the Road before him;
With which he was resolv'd, if possible,
To join our Foot at *Shaftsbury* last Night.

Elfleda. He is a gallant Youth: I should have scorn'd
him,
Had he spoke kind to me at such a Time:
But had I known the Reason of his Coolness,
I wou'd have strove to rival him in Glory.

[*A Trumpet sounds.*]

Q. Alfw. What can that Trumpet mean—the wicked
Danes
Have vanquish'd *Alfred*, and took us unguarded?

Elfleda. Take Courage, Madam, it may be good
News?

Enter Ethelred.

Ethel. May I be constantly the Harbinger

[*Kneels to the Queen, and kisses her Hand.*]

Of Royal *Alfred's* safe Return in Peace:

And lovely Princess, may I have your Pardon

[*Kneels to the Princess.*]

For my abrupt Departure? I profess,

I had much more to say, than I had Time to speak.

Elfleda. Rise, worthy Earl, my Father's best Support

[*She raises him: he salutes her.*]

Your quick Return; strikes me with Admiration;

My Gratitude, obliges me to grant,

Not only Pardon, Praise, and Thanks are due.

Ethel.

14 ALFRED the GREAT;

Ethel. To Love alone! he was my chief Conductor,
Tho' silent, yet, he led me to my Duty.
Fir'd with the Hopes of doing such brave Actions,
As might commend me to your Royal Favour:
I ask'd King *Alfred's* Leave to challenge out
The bravest of the *Danes* to single Combat;
But was refus'd: Had my Request been granted,
I'd one by one, have fought their Captains round,
And laid their Laurels at my Princess Feet,
Or forfeited my Life; and dying boasted,
That my ambitious Mind, aim'd at a Goddess;
And like *Ixion*, for the rash Attempt,
My fleeting Soul, must have embrac'd the Air.

Q. Alfw. I think 'was wise in *Alfred* to restrain you?

Elst. Valour, like yours, should not be singly stak'd
And worried out by endless Opposition:
But duly at the Head of Thousands plac'd
Your great Exploits will raise such Emulation,
Each Officer would strive to be your Second,
And every common Soldier, be a Hero.

Ethel. How can I bear your Praise, and not be vain:
Yet all my Merit takes its Source from Love;
A Spring, which constantly supplies with Spirit
The several rapid Streams of vital Blood,
Through all their Windings, to my big swoln Heart.

Elsteda. Too big, I doubt, to be confin'd to Love;
A Passion, like its God, of tender Frame,
Who frighted at the boisterous God of War,
Runs back and sees not Beauty in his Arms.

Ethel. But when he finds that *Mars* has lost his Fury,
And *Venus* holds him fast, the Urchin ventures
In silken Fetters, to secure the Warriour;
And Beauty keeps the Prisoner at her Pleasure:

Thus

Deliverer of his Country.

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Thus am I bound, and Glory in my Chains.

[*Trumpets sound.*]

2. *Alfw.* My *Alfred* comes : O ! let me haste to meet him.

Enter Alfred and his Son Edward.

Alf. My dearest Queen, [*Embraces her.*] I hope we now are met,

By God's Permission, not to part again
By Foes compell'd : for now I think I've made,
A very safe and honourable Peace ?

Edw. Most honour'd, Madam : [*Kneeling to the 2.*] thus, I crave your Blessing ?

Elst. [*Kneeling to Alfred.*] My Royal Father ; Words cannot express

Your Daughter's Joy, for this, your safe Return.

Alf. My much lov'd Child, [*Embracing Elsteda*]

I now will make you happy,

By giving you to him, who well deserves you :
Brave *Ethelred*, take her as the Reward

Of your great Services :

[*Ethelred takes her Hand, kisses it, and bows to Alfred.*]

Had not your timely unexpected Aid

O'ertook us as we march'd from *Shaftsbury*,

We shou'd have been inferiour to the *Danes* ;

We might, we should, have lost another Battle ;

For *Edmund's* Troops were forc'd to quit the Field,

After a very sharp and bloody Conflict :

The Enemy confess, he made a good Retreat.

Daughter, prepare to solemnize ? To-morrow

We'll celebrate your Nuptials, with the Peace

Throughout all *Wessex*.

Edw.

Edw. My noble Friend, [*To Ethelred.*] and much
beloved Sister, [*Salutes Elfreda.*]

If all the Subjects in my Father's Kingdom
Were sensible, as I am, of your Worth,
They might expect a Race of Heroes from you
To free all *England* from the *Danish* Yoke:
This Peace would be the least Cause of their Joy.

Alf. My Son, whilst that the *Danes* do keep this Peace,
I'll not forgive the Man who dares infringe it:
'Tis not the Extent of Kingdoms makes us Great,
'Tis not the Conquests, or new Acquisitions,
Which Tyrants often are oblig'd to Slaves for,
Can make a Monarch happy: 'Tis the Hearts
Of a free People, placing Confidence
In one, who by their Choice, or by Succession
Rules over them; not as his Property,
But for their Good, who in a Time of Danger,
Has Courage to repel, each bold Invader;
And in a Time of Peace, with Equity,
Secures to every one their Lands and Goods:
Who suffers not the Rich, to oppress the Poor,
But finds Employment for the Industrious,
And from the Rich, procures the Needy Alms:
Who never punishes, but by such Laws,
As have been known, and publickly acknowledged:
Who makes no freer with his Subjects Purfes,
But what his State, and their Support requires:
If such a Prince should by repelling Force,
O'er-run his Neighbour's Country, he may gain
True Greatness, by dethroning of a Tyrant,
And making more Men free:— [*A Bell rings.*]
The Vesper's Bell, calls us to give due Praise
To him who grants, Prosperity and Peace. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

SCENE *changes to the Inside of the Cottage*
in Athelney.

Dunulf unlacing his Shoes in the Chimney Corner.

Maliba Spining.

Dun. Now it's too late, you shou'd have told me of it
As soon as I came in: the Moon shone bright,
I should have follow'd her, and brought her back;
But now it's dark, I have no Chance to find her.

[Stamping his Foot.

Maliba. She said she was not born to sit and Spin,
Her Mother had bred her in a better Manner:
Then flung the Distaff from her in a Rage,
And said she'd burn the next came in her Way:
Then out she flew, saying, "Pray tell my Father
"I'm gone to seek my Fortune; never more
"Will I return, whilst you are living."

Dun. Did not you say, you mis'd your Purse of Silver?

Maliba. I did, but not till after she was gone
Beyond your reach too far, which was the Reason,
That I was leath to trouble you about it.

Dun. I'm sure, you must, provoke her very much;
I never knew her Spirit rise so high,
As to forget her Duty: Alas! poor Child! *[Sighs.*
——I wish, I had been at Home.

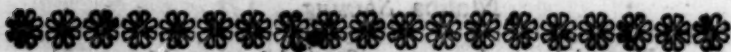
Mal. If you had been at Home, 'twou'd have been
the same,
She does not seem to care for either of us.

Dun. Her taking of the Purse doth much concern me,
It may enable her to get far off:
If she shou'd prove dishonest in the World, *[Weeps.*
The News will break my Heart—I must inquire

18 ALERED the GREAT;

To-morrow, and find out which Way she took;
To-night, I'll go to Bed; but shall not sleep. *[Exit.*

Mal. 'Tis well, I parted with the Purse, or else,
He'd not believe the Story I have told:
I've lost my Silver, but may hoard up Gold. *[Exit.*



A C T II.

SCENE, *The Court at Winchester.*

Enter Elfreda, led between King Alfred and Ethelred.

And Queen Alswitha, led by Prince Edward.

Alf. THE holy Man has done his Office—now
I'll give you with her all my Lands in *Dorset*;

And unto her, I'll give my best Advice:
Daughter, look on your Husband as your Lord,
Whose kind Protection, you must now depend on:
Be you his loving Wife, deserve his Confidence,
Let no one break the Harmony between ye,
But be yourself, the Judge of his Behaviour;
Be careful of your own; consult his Honour;
His Interest make your own: relieve his Cares,
By chearfulness of Temper, at his Meals;
And make his Pillow easy: never doubt
His Love without just Cause: be ever ready
T'oblige, and never treat him with Contempt:
If bless'd with Offspring, teach them to obey him:
Your own Example will inforce the Precept;
And his will teach them, to return your Love.

Q. Alfw. I hope it will! Good *Ethelred* permit me
To recommend the mildest Treatment of her:

She

She has a Generosity of Soul,
That needs no Monitor to Gratitude ;
The more you trust her, she'll the more deserve
Your Confidence——The more you love her,
She'll be the more deserving of your Love.

[*A Trumpet sounds.*

Alf. 'Tis News from *Edmund* ; I suppose the *Danes*
Are quite march'd off——

Enter Ethelward.

[*He kneels to the King and Queen.*

You come in Time, to grace your Sister's Nuptials.

[*Raises him.*

Ethelw. Was ever Grief and Joy so mix'd together ;
Long may you live, dear Sister, [*Salutes Elfreda.*] and
be happy [*Taking Ethelred's Hand.*

With this right valiant Earl ; but Royal Sir, [*To Alfred.*
The News I bring, will turn your Joy to Mourning :
Soon as the *Danish* Infantry mov'd off

Their Cavalry, being almost out of Sight ;

Edmund said to me——“ Brother, with the Foot

“ March you to *Shaftsbury* ; with the Horse

“ I'll overtake you ; but my Father charg'd me

“ To see 'em quit the Plain.”——I march'd off,

And almost got to *Shaftsbury*, before

I knew of any Danger he was in :

When from the Rear, Lieutenant sent me Word,

He heard my Brother's Trumpet sound a Call :

I mounted *Rhone*, and bid those in the Rear

With the baggage Horses, and my Trumpets follow :

Full Speed I rode ; but when I came in Sight,

And saw him, with the fifty Horse you left him,

Attack'd by thrice their Number, and surrounded ;

I cry'd aloud, "Break thro'; I'm come to help you;"
 Which he essay'd, and Slaughter dealt around him,
 And almost clear'd his Way; but the Instant
 I spur'd to join him: Oh! I saw him fall,
 Pierc'd thro' by some behind, and only five

[*The Men strike their Breasts, and the Women weep.*]

Of his little Troop came to me——

——the rest were overpower'd;

And we too shou'd been taken, had not they heard
 My Trumpets sound, which thinking near at Hand,
 They wheel'd about, and mov'd off to the Right:
 And all our Horse they took, were doubly guarded:
 We six detain'd, my Brother's lifeless Coarse:

We have conducted it to *Shaftsbury*;

And all our Force wait there, to know your Orders.

2. *Alfw.* Alas, my Son, [*Weeping.*] thy Life was
 short and glorious.

Elfeda. He never more [*Weeping.*] will bless me
 with his Kindness.

Alf. Peace to his Soul—his Body shall be buried
 With all the Honours, due to his Atchievements:
 The faithless *Danes*, shall feel my dire Revenge;
 Now they have kill'd my dear and valiant Son:
 The attack upon his little Troop was cowardly;
 And a most base, perfidious, Breach of Peace.

Edw. Let us expel the Infidels, out of *England*.

Alf. Take you a Troop of Horse, Son *Ethelred*;
 Conduct the Queen with your Wife to *Warham Castle*;
 It's Part of what I give you for her Dowry:
 'Tis well provided; leave them there in Safety:
 To-morrow, come to me at *Shaftsbury*;
 For there I'll go To-night——
 Do you, Son *Edward*, post to the Earl of *Devon*;

You'll

You'll find him at his Homestall *Dulverton*;
 Bid him secure his Friends, in *Kinwith-Castle*,
 In Case the Infidels should move that Way :
 Next cross to *Wales* ; tell *Madoc*, he must join me ;
 Soon as he can, with all the Force he has.
 And you, Son *Ethelward*, must sail for *Scotland* ;
 Take my best Ships fit to protect the Transports,
 And fishing Vessels, ready on that Coast ;
 Bring *Gregour*, with such *Scots*, as he can spare ;
 Try for to land 'em safe in *Stokland Marsh* ;
 In *Somersetshire*, we and the *Welch* will join 'em ;
 And then we'll try to drive the *Heathens* out. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E *changes to* Hodden-Hill,
With the Beacon on the Border of Devonshire.

Enter Egwina. [Resting.]

Egw. This last steep, *Hill*, has almost broke my Heart ;
 I'm almost at the Top, they said ; I then should see
Dulverton very plain, when at the Beacon : [*Walks on.*]
 Oh ! here the Beacon is, and *Dulverton* at Bottom :
 But I'm so tired, I must rest myself
 Against the Beacon-side : I'll lay me down
 Here in the Shade—— [*Lays down and falls asleep.*]

Enter from behind the Beacon, Odda leading Augurthā.

Odda. You're almost out of Breath ; here set you down
 On this, the shadiest Side o'the Beacon : [*Sees Egwina.*]
 But soft, my Love—what pretty Maid is this ?
 Her Dress is very neat : She's fast asleep.

Augur. She seems to smile, as if her Dreams were
 pleasing :

O Innocence ! how happy is that Mind,
 That has no Cares, or Pride to discompose it ?

Odda. She holds her Hands up, as with Admiration;
I'll take her Bundle; let's behind the Beacon:

[*Takes her Bundle off her Arm.*

She's going to' wake; I wonder what she'll say.

[*They retire.*

Egw. [*Waking.*] It shines so bright, my Eyes can
hardly bear it:

No, no, 'tis Day-light;—but I'm sure the Moon
Was fixt in me:—Alas! 'tis all a Dream,
I thought I saw, all *England* lightned by it:
But 'twas a charming Dream.—I've lost my Bundle;
Good lack! 'tis hard, to pay so dear for Pleasure,
And only in a Dream.

Odda. [*Coming forward.*] No, no, my dear, you
have not lost your Bundle;
Here 'tis again, provided you will tell us
What your Dream was:—My Wife pretends to Judgment;

She will explain the Meaning, if it has any.

Egw. Indeed, good Sir, I can't tell you my Dream;
I'd rather loose my Bundle, than I'd tell
My Dream to any Man, no, not my Father;
But much I fear, [*Weeps.*] I ne'er shall see him more.

Aug. Give her the Bundle; take it, my sweet Lass;
[*Gives it her.*

You shall go home with me, and tell your Dream:
I live, but at the Bottom of the Hill.

Egw. Thank you, good Madam, I was going thither;
I wish I could get Sight of Lady *Devon*.

Aug. I find you do not know, my Lady *Devon*;
What wou'd you with her?

Egw. I'd tell her truly, that my Mother-in-law
Had us'd me very hard, and set my Father

So

So much against me, as to give Consent
To turn me out of Doors, with this small Stock

[Shews the Purse.]

To keep me 'till I can get in some Service,
Which now I seek: I'd tell her my own Mother
Had from my Childhood, learnt me Needle-work;
And if her Ladyship should like the Sample,
Perhaps she might retain me in her Service:
Madam, I'll shew it you, 'tis the second;

[Gives the Sampler.]

My Mother gave the last I work'd away
To my Godmother; but she alas, is dead too.

Aug. Child, did you do this Work? There's many
Ladies

Much higher bred, who cannot equal it;
But how came you to think of Lady Devon?

Egw. Because I've heard her Goodness highly prais'd,
And charitable Acts so much commended.

Odda. Take her, my dear, I hope she tells you Truth;
With little Pains she'll be a fit Companion
To sit and work with you, when I'm away.

Aug. Well, Child; I am the Person, that you seek:
If you'll be grateful, I will do my Endeavour
To raise your Fortune, as I find you useful.

Egw. *[Courtesying.]* If I had known 't had been your
Ladyship,

I hardly shou'd have spoke my Mind so boldly;
But you're all Goodness, and I hope will excuse
My Ignorance, if I've wanted in Respect?

Aug. I would not have you more reserv'd my dear,
Than you have been already: Now, tell me
Where lives your Father?

Egw. In

224 ALFRED the GREAT;

Egw. In the Isle of *Athelney*, an't please your Ladyship.

Odda. And when came you from thence, Child?

Egw. Yesterday Afternoon, an't please your Honour.

Aug. Where did you lay last Night?

Egw. At *Cothleston*, my good Lady.

Odda. And what Time, set you out this Morning, Child?

Egw. As soon as it was Light, an't please your Lordship.

Aug. Where did you Breakfast, Child?

Egw. I stop'd at *Brunton-Rafe*, I think they call'd it, And there I got a little Milk and Bread.

Odda. She must be hungry, take her home my dear, I'm sure she's honest: Ask her no more Questions.

Aug. Only one more, and I am satisfied: Your Mother learnt you to work:—Pray tell me, Whose Daughter was she, or by whom brought up?

Egw. I am sorry, it is not, within my Knowledge; If 'twas, your Ladyship, should fully know Who were my Mother's Friends:—I've only heard My Mother was brought up at a great House, And o'er a Garden Wall, my Father stole her; But never had a Penny o' Money with her.

Odda. What was your Father?

Egw. I never heard, he'd any other Business Than that he follows: Now he is a Neatherd, And has a Flock, which I did use to tend: It griev'd me sore, to leave my pretty Lambs; But they poor simple Things, will soon forget me.

Odda. You did not tell your Story, where you lay Last Night, or stop'd this Morning?

Egw. No, my good Lord, I thought 'twas to no Purpose To trouble busy Folks with my Misfortunes.

Odda.

Odda. Let us go home, 'tis Time she had Refreshment.

Aug. Lend me your Arm, dear Child, down this steep Hill.

[Takes Egwina by the Arm.]

Odda. She must been faint, 'had she not fell asleep.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE changes to the Danish Camp, with
their famous Standard.

Enter Hubba and Guthurm with their Officers.

Guth. Where are my valiant Friends, the Captains of
your Cavalry?

Hub. Seeing some *English* Horse, were on the Plain,
When we were almost off; they ask'd our Leave,
To stay 'till they were gone; or to enquire
The Reason of their still remaining there;
We gave them Leave to watch the *English* Horse,
So as not go near 'em, if they left the Plain;
But if they stay'd 'till Night, in friendly Sort
To offer them to quit it, soon as they wou'd;
Which if refus'd, we bid 'em stand their Ground
Until the Morning, ere they left it to 'em,
And then to follow us:—'Tis more than Time,
They should be here;—but now, I see—
Anand alone:—What can this mean?

Enter Anand.

Anand. 'Tis well, my noble General, we stay'd,
Or else you'd been pursued;—
No sooner were your Colours out of Sight,
But their Horse came towards us, about Fifty
Osctyel advanced, with equal Number,
To know the Reason, why they follow'd us:

Not

Not seeing our Reserve, they fell upon him,
 And put him in Disorder; we approach'd
 And turn'd the Scale; after a long Pursuit,
 We came up with 'em, and surrounded 'em:
 We killed but few, besides the Prince, who led 'em,
 Just as his Brother, with a Reinforcement-
 Was come to save him, but he came too late;
 And we with forty Prisoners, and their Horses
 Got safe off to their Right.—*Godrun* advis'd
 To push to *Warham-Castle*;—surprise it,
 And keep our Prisoners there:—We did so,
 And came in Time, before the Gates were shut:
 By placing of our Prisoners before us,
 They thought us Friends, and let us enter in;
 But soon we let 'em know, we were their Masters:
 Made all secure, and *Godrun's* in Possession.
Hub. And so, you've left your Troop there?
Anand.——No, my good General;
 Succeeding here so well, *Oscytel* purpos'd
 A like Surprise, on *Exeter* in *Devon*,
 And thereby to secure, the strongest Holds
 In both those Counties, 'till we were reliev'd;
Godrun we left at *Warham*, with his Troop,
 And all the Prisoners.——
 With ours, we both set out for *Exeter*;
 But were not off the Heath, before we saw
 An *English* Troop, making towards the *Castle*;
 We wheel'd about, and got into their Rear:
 Soon as they saw us, they made their Retreat
 Into the *Castle* Gates; our Friends within
 Decoying 'em (being dress'd in the Prisoner's Cloaths
 About the Drawbridge)—Two Women with the *English*,
 Behav'd

Behav'd like Men, led half the Party in ;
The Earl of *Kent*, was in their Rear, and faced us,
With the other half, and kept us at Pike Distance,
'Till they had all got in, and shut the Gates.

Hub. Then *Godrun* and his Troop, are over-power'd :
Is't so, speak quickly. ———

Anand. No, my good General, he with wiley Craft,
Soon as the *Heroins* were on the Bridge,
Quick drew it up, and left the Men without
Between the Walls.

Hub. And what did you without ?

Anand. *Oscytel* and I, differed in our Opinions,
I would have kept 'em in, but he suggested
Others might soon be coming after them,
And we might be hem'd in ; therefore insisted
To make ourselves secure at *Exeter*.

Hub. And so you left him, to go there without you ?

Anand. Finding him resolute, I bid him take my Troop,
Wish'd him Success, and said, I'd haste to you,
That both of 'em might be reliev'd in Time.

Hub. Your Enterprizes, have been desperate ;
But since the Peace is broke, and by the *English*,
I may with Honour, now renew the War ;
'Twas very rash to venture so far from us,
But as I'm reinforced, I may relieve 'em,
The *English* will not venture to withstand us ;
We'll first to *Warham*, next to *Exeter* :
I wish that *Oscytel*, had took your Council,
To keep 'em in at *Warham* ; *Alfred* may now
Re-take it possibly, before we come :

Godrun will not be able to defend it. [*Trumpets sound.*
Stand fast—surely the *English* durst not meet us ;—

[*Looking out.*

No, 'tis my Brother *Halfdene*, I know his Colours.

Enter

Enter Haldene with Officers from the Right.

Welcome, my ever ready, loving Brother.

Halfd. Where's *Ivar* :—Have you lost a Battle?
Is he slain?—Say quickly, am I come too late?

Hub. He's gone for *Bristol*, to embark for *Denmark*,
And thinks he's left me, here secur'd by Peace,
We made with *Alfred* : By their holy Relicks
They swore to keep it ; but am just inform'd
'Tis broke by them ; But as we march to the *West*,
I'll tell you more :—*Guthurm*, stay in these Counties,
And keep the *Welch* in Awe, till we return.

[Exeunt, Guthurm and his Officers to the Right.

[Hubba and Haldene to the Left with their Officers.

SCENE changes to a Garden at Dulverton.

Enter Odda, Augurtha, and Egwina.

Aug. My Lord, while you, amuse yourself in grafting,
We'll walk in the Wilderness.

Odda. Do so, my dear.—

[Exeunt, Augurtha and Egwina.

I know she can't be easy in her Mind,
Until the sweet young Lass, has told her Dream :
If I don't ask, she'll tell it me at Night :

[Cutting Grafts,

These Apples are the best Sort in the Garden :

[A Bell rings.

Some Body wants me ; 'tis my Study Bell.

[Exit.

Re-enter Augurtha and Egwina.

Aug. Thus, I explain your Dream : The Moon, or
Luna,
Is by the *Heathens*, sometimes called *Lucina*,

Or the Goddess of Childbirth: She plac'd in you,
Denotes, that by her Aid, you shall bring forth:
But what:—A Light,—denotes a Prince or King:
The Splendor of that Light, to shine o'er *England*,
Denotes your Offspring, will be *England's* King:
A lucky Dream it is;—I'll bring you up
As my own Child, with Education such,
As may compleat you fit, for *England's* Queen.

Egw. Your Ladyship confounds me, quite with
Goodness. [*Courtesying.*]

Aug. Sit in this Arbour, I will soon return;

[*Egwina goes into the Arbour.*]

I'll find my Lord, and tell him your good Fortune.

[*Exit.*]

Egw. My Head turns round, I must compose myself,
'Till she returns, or I shall loose my Senses:—Heigh ho.

[*Falls asleep.*]

BRITANNIA rises.

A S O N G.

I.

LET Ambition, fire thy Mind;
Thine were born, o'er Men to reign:
Not to follow, Flocks design'd;
Scorn thy Crook, and leave the Plain.

II.

Crowns I'll throw, within thy Lap;
Thou a Monarch's Mouth shalt feed:
Joys abounds, without Mishap;
In the glorious Life you'll lead.

Let

III.

*Let not Scenes of Empire fright;
 Scenes of Empire, Pleasures are:
 Thou shalt only, know Delight;
 All the Joy, but not the Care.*

IV.

*Shepherdes, then yield your Charms;
 For the Blessings, I foretell:
 Take a Prince, within your Arms;
 Who will ever, love you well.* [Sinks.

Egw. [Waking.] This Vision is sufficient, to confirm me,

In what the Countess, has so well explain'd :

Enter Odda, Augurtha, and Prince Edward.

Who is he with 'em? The most comely Youth,
 I e'er beheld; his Eyes are fix'd upon me;
 They pierce me thro', but are most lovely sweet:
 I never felt such Pleasure, to be gaz'd on.

Aug. My dear, *Egwina*, this King *Alfred's* Son,
 Is Heir apparent to the Crown of *Wesssex*.

Edw. Since my dear Brother's Death, I'm sadly so:
 —But not of *Wesssex* only;

My Father is resolv'd, if possibly,
 To drive the faithless *Danes*, from out all *England*:
 Long may he live, to win and blest this Island:
 Could I be happy, with so sweet a Nymph,
 As this good Chance, has introduc'd me to:

[Bowing to *Egwina*.]

Should she prefer, a Cottage to a Crown;
 I wou'd despise a Crown, to be her Swain.

Egw.

Egw. [*Courtesying.*] I never yet was fond of being flatter'd ;

Nor can I think myself, worthy your Notice :

But Princes may, inhance the intrinsick Value,

Of whatsoe'er, they please to call their Coin.

Edw. By all that's Good, I speak my Mind sincerely ;

My Father might perhaps, prefer a Princess :

Perhaps a Princess, I must wed to please him ;

But as you are, the only lovely Maid,

In whom I've found, less Vanity than Beauty ;

You've fix'd me yours for ever.——

O ! let me seal this Vow, on your fair Hand.

[*Kisses Egwina's Hand.*]

Aug. The Grass is very damp ; let us go in.

Odda. If your Highness pleases, we will follow you ?

Edw. Pray lead the Way, this fair one shall conduct me,

With this soft Hand, into the Path of Bliss. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *changes to the Inside of Warham-Castle. A Dining-Room, with a Table spread.*

Enter Queen Alfwina, Elfreda, and Godrun.

Courteously carrying Lights before 'em, which he places on a Table ready spread.

God. Your Majesty and Highness, now may freely Call for what e'er you want ; 'twill be my Pleasure, To make you think, this Castle still your own.

Elfr. Sir, 'tis my own, I am not to be brib'd With my own Goods, by him, who stole 'em from me.

God. Please not to fix, so hard an Appellation On him, who only studies, to oblige you :

The Right of Conquest, can't be call'd a Theft.

Elfr.

32 ALFRED the GREAT;

Elf. 'Tis false, you never put yourself in Danger,
But skulk'd behind the Bridge: No one can conquer,
Who does not risk his Life, to gain his Conquest:
You trap'd us, by a cowardly Device.

God. I do not chuse, to remind you of my Power.

Q. Alfw. You threat'n us, Sir, I thought you'd
change your Note.

God. In every Thing, the Princess may command me.

Elf. 'Tis not to see your Face, again to night.

God. The cruelest Punishment, you could inflict;
But I'll obey, to shew you good Example,
All should submit, to the Power they find strongest.

[Exit.

*Enter two English Prisoners with Supper, Cyder, &c.
The Ladies set down and eat.*

Q. Alfw. Well, after all, we have great Favour
done us;

That they'll permit, our Countrymen to attend us.

1st Waiter. The Maids have Orders, to deliver to
you

The Keys of this Apartment, when they leave you,
That you may rest secure, and fear no Danger.

Elf. That Favour, we most willingly accept.

2d Waiter. On this Condition, before seven To-
morrow,

The Governor, may pay his Compliment,

And Breakfast with you.

Q. Alfw. We must admit, what we've no Power to
refuse.

1st Waiter. As I stood near the Draw-Bridge, in a
Corner,

Not much in Sight of the *Danes*, this Billet wrapt
in Lead,

I caught

I caught with Risk of falling in the Water :
'Tis directed, to your Highness. [*Gives it to the Princess.*]

Elst. Thanks, my good Friend, I surely will reward
you,

Soon as we are reliev'd : I make no Doubt
My Father'll know of this, and march to save us.

Q. Alfw. Pray take away the Table, and all Things
on it :

Bid one of the Maids, bring us the Keys you spoke of.

[*Waiters, carry out the Table.*]

Elst. [*Opens the Letter and reads.*] My dearest Princess,
The Enemy have left us, from without,
And I have sent to the King, three Messengers,
Divided separate Ways, to get Supplies
Of Men and Instruments to scale the Walls :
Their Pris'ners they must guard, else they'll assist us ;
Keep up your Courage, soon we'll mount the Ramparts ;
Comfort the Queen, I hope within few Hours
To loose my Life, or call you mine indeed :

'Till when, it seems an Age to *Ethelred*.

Q. Alfw. My Prayers shall be for his Success and
Safety.

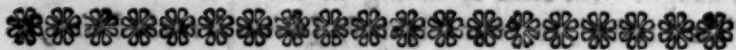
Elst. My Life depends on his ; if *Elsteda* should see
Her Lord kill'd in th'Assault, this poniard sets her free.

[*Shewing a Poniard ; hides it again.*]

Enter Maid with the Keys.

*She gives 'em to Elsteda ; then takes the Lights ; they
follow her out.*





A C T III.

SCENE, *The Dining-Room in Warham-Castle,
with a Balcony backwards.*

Enter Queen Alswitha and Elfreda.

Elfr. MADAM, what can you think—'Tis almost
Seven,

And no Assault begun?

Q. Alfw. Possibly, his Messengers, were intercepted,
And *Alfred's* unacquainted, with our Danger.

Elfr. That cannot be, as they were separated;
I wish that *Ethelred*, may not Attempt
The Assault, before he's properly provided.

Enter Maid.

Maid. [*Courtesying.*] The Governor presents his Duty,
Desires you'll order Breakfast, to your Liking;
And give him Leave, to pay his Compliments.

Q. Alfw. Tell him, from his Civilities already shewn,
We hope he still, will act a generous Part;
And on those Terms, we are ready to admit him.

Elfr. We are not hungry yet, but chuse to stay,
At least, an Hour longer, for our Breakfast. [*Exit Maid.*
What wou'd he, by this Visit?

Q. Alfw. What e'er he means, we must n't treat
him haughtily;

Ill used, he may throw off his Complaisance:
But here he comes, alone.

Enter

Enter Godrun.

God. Good Morning to your Majesty, and Daughter
I hope you will excuse, this early Visit :
I cannot bear your Banishment, fair Princess ;
And find, when present, I'm at your Devotion:
Though I am Governor, 'tis you command.

Elf. Sir, I have no Command, but know your Power ;
All we desire, is honourable Usage,
'Till we're deliver'd hence, by Peace or War.

God. 'Tis in your Power, to save your Father's
Subjects,
The Loss of many Lives: This Castle's strong,
'Tis well provided, with all Necessaries ;
And I'm resolv'd, to defend the Treasure in't,
Whilst I have one Man left.

Q. Alf. Which Way is't in her Power, to save the
Lives
Of any of our Subjects ?

God. Write to King *Alfred*, tell him, I'll give up
This Castle, and that with my Troops, I'll serve him
If he'll consent to make the Princess mine :
And you fair Conq'ress [*Kneeling.*] of as bold a Heart,
As any in your Father's Kingdom, deign to look
On me no longer, as your Enemy : [*Trumpets sound.*
Ha ! an Assault so soon [*Starting up.*] then ; I am des-
perate : [*Runs to the Balcony.*
Quit the Assault, or know proud *Ethelred*,
I'll take the Lives, of both the Queen and Princess.
[*Coming forward.*] Say, you will write to *Alfred*—or
by the Gods
I'll force you to Compliance.

[*Takes hold of Elfreda's left Arm.*

Elf. Villain forbear, or never hope Forgiveness.

God. I must offend, before you can forgive.

[*Pulling her towards the Door.*]

Elf. Ruffian, stand off, I am not to be forc'd,
Whilst I have this, [*Drawing the Poniard.*] and Courage
thus [*Stabs him.*] to use it. [*He falls.*]

Q. Alfw. [*Taking his Hanger.*] I'll secure this.

[*A single Trumpet sounds a Parly.*]

Ethelred. [*From without.*] Send us the Queen and
Princess, we'll retire.

Q. Alfw. Go, lock the outward Doors. [*Exit Elfeda.*]

God. Fool, that I was, to think so bold a Spirit,
Was to be won, by any Means, but Force :

Re-enter Elfeda.

I should succeeded, could I but disarm'd her ;

[*Trumpets sound an Assault.*]

Now, I must see her taken from me :—Oh !

The Pains of Death—lead to the Shades bel—w.

[*He dies, falling Head and Shoulders behind the Scene.*]

Elf. Give me the Hanger, [*Takes it.*] I'll cut off his
Head ;

[*Seemingly cutting it off.*] Exposing it, may make 'em yield
the Castle. [*Goes with it to the Balcony.*]

Q. Alfw. Was she a Man, what cou'd she not perform,
With such a daring Spirit ? [*Trumpets sound longer.*]

Elf. [*From the Balcony.*] See Madam, how the Danes
do quit the Ramparts

At sight of this grim Face : [*Flings it over the Balcony.*]
Take it among you, 'twas your Governor's.

[*Trumpets sound louder.*]

Welcome ! dear *Ethelred* ; he enters bravely :

[*Without, Huzza, Huzza.*]

The Danes submit, and yield their Arms to the English.

Q. Alfw.

Deliverer of his Country. 37

Q. Alfw. Delightful sound ! my Prayers have succeeded.

Elfr. [*Coming forward.*] O ! let me fly, and meet him, for he comes,

With Bridegroom Haste, to find us out. [*Exit running.*]

Q. Alfw. I am glad, he is not wounded.

Enter Ethelred and Elfreda.

Ethelred. [*Embracing Elfreda.*] Thus, let me ever press you, to my Heart. [*Kneels to the Queen.*]

Q. Alfw. [*Raising him.*] Son, may you ever thus, come safe thro' Danger.

Elfr. No Dangers any more, shall separate us.

Ethelr. My Fears for you, made me demand a Parly :
Where was their Governor, he should have parlied,
Or kept his Men to't longer ?—What headless Body's
that ?

Elfr. There the Villain lies : [*Pointing to the Body.*]

O ! with what Courtesy,

And what we thought, most honourable Treatment,
He try'd to gain our Esteem ; until this Morning,
He made a bold, and insolent Proposal,
But just before the Alarm of your Assault :

Then, growing desperate, he wou'd have forc'd me,
Had not this Poniard, struck him to the Heart.

Ethelr. Then 'twas his Head, you expos'd from the
Balcony,

And flung down, 'mongst the Danes ?

Q. Alfw. I seiz'd his Hanger, but my Arm being weak,
She boldly took it, and his Head dissever'd.

Ethelr. O ! most heroic, charming, matchless Princess,
Let us withdraw, and leave this bloody Scene :

[*Trumpet sounds.*]

Ha ! [*Drawing his Sword.*] What is this, a Revolt ?

Enter an English Soldier.

Soldier. A Packet, from King *Alfred.*

[Gives it to Ethelred,

Ethelr. [To the Soldier.] Remove that Body. [Puts up his Sword.] [The Soldier draws out the Body,

[Opening the Packet.] This, is for your Majesty.

[Gives a Letter to the Queen,

And this to me: [Opens it and reads.] Brave Ethelred,

“ I hope you have succeeded, and regained
Your Castle, and your Bride; love her, and make her
happy :

The *Danish* Horse, which drove you in, have seiz'd
On *Exeter*; but what much more concerns me,
Their Foot are join'd by *Guthurm*, from *East Anglia*,
And since by *Halfdene*, from *Northumbria* :

They're on the March, to give me Battle; which
I must avoid, as they're so much Superior :

I send you all my Horse, with Foot behind 'em ;

The rest I shall disband, 'till Time shall serve

To call 'em to my Standard.—Comfort the Queen ;

Tell her, I think her safe, in your Protection :

As for myself, I'll strive to get to *Wales* ;

If not, I'm so disguis'd, no one will know me :

Doubtless, the Almighty, in his proper Time,

For their Perfidiousness, will blast the *Danes*,

Preserve, and make my Friends, again Victorious :

'Till when, strive to forget the Name of ALFRED.”

Q. Alfw. O! never—is't possible, to think at all,
And his Idea, not be uppermost ;

I cannot think of any Act of Goodness,

In which I have not, had his bright Example.

Elf.

Elf. Let us not only think of *Alfred's* Name,
But let us strive to make it found more glorious;
Let us confront these *Danes*.

Ethelr. Their Numbers are too great, and 'twould
be Rashness
To face 'em in the Field; but their whole Power,
Cannot subdue this Castle:—would they set down be-
fore it,
Our Friends might join, and call the watchful *Alfred*
From his Retirement.—Let us walk round the Terras,
Review the Troops, and order 'em Refreshment. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *changes to the Garden at Dulverton.*

Enter Augurtha leading Egwina.

Aug. Come, take a little Air, have you been ever
Subject,
To fainting Fits before?

Egw. O! no, I ne'er before parted with one,
That I had rather part with Life, than loose:
I am undone, if he should not return,
According to his Promise.

Aug. You may depend on't, he'll return again
Soon as his Father's Business will permit him;
He told my Lord, before he ever saw you,
That he must go to *Wales*:—The News this Morn,
Of the *Danes* taking *Exeter*, oblig'd
My Lord to post away, for *Kinwith-Castle*;
Where we must follow, if we'd be secure.

Egw. And can Prince *Edward*, come to us, when
there?

Aug. He can, he will, he charg'd me to remove you;
And said, his Life, depended on your Safety.

Egw. Why did he leave me then, whilst in my Fit?

Aug. He saw the Colour in your Cheeks return;
He kiss'd you, and cry'd out—" 'Tis Death to part!

" But if I see her Eyes again, my Father's Orders

" Will never be obey'd.—Haste to *Kinwith*;

" I'll see you there, as soon as possible."

Egw. I hope he'll meet no Beauty to detain him,
That has more courtly Acts, than I can Practice.

Aug. My dear, I suckled him, and know his Temper.

Egw. Is he inconstant, dear, good Lady, tell me?

Aug. He's amorous, but has a great Command
Over his Passions: Always very careful,
And circumspect, in making of a Promise;
But none is more exact, in the Performance
Of what he undertakes: I thought him Proof
Against your Charms, until another Visit;
But find, I was mistaken.

Egw. His Promises so great, his Love so eager,
With the strong Prepossession of the Vision,
Made me resistless, in his powerful Arms.

Aug. He loves you tenderly, he's very grateful;
If you are wise, and never shew Distrust,
His generous Soul, will ever make him constant.
Come, let us in, we have no Time to loose;
For *Kinwith-Castle*, is a great Way off.

SCENE changes to the Outside of the Cottage
in *Athelney*.

Enter Alfred disguis'd, and Dunulf.

Alf. I hope, Friend *Dunulf*, you will find your Daughter:
If Providence should give a happy Turn
To my Affairs, I then will have her sound
By Proclamation, to return your Kindness.

You

You must not let your Wife, know who I am ;
Tell her, I'm an old Friend, you have not seen
Since you was Faulconer unto Prince *Alfred* :
Then, I would have you find my Son in *Wales* ;
Charge him not to discover where I am,
Not even to *Madoc*, but to consult with him,
To join the *Scots* when *Ethelward* Returns ;
And in the Night, march 'em to *Selwood-Forest* :
Then let him find me here, and take my further Orders.

Enter Maliba from the Cottage.

Mal. I thought you never wou'd find your Way home,
The Meat is boild to Rags, the Puddings spoild :
What hungry Wretch is he, that follows you ?

Alf. [*Aside.*] Alas ! I am both hungry and wretched.
[*Sighs.*

Dun. He may be hungry, therefore, I am glad
He comes when we're provided : He's an old Friend,
I have not seen, I think, since I was Fa'lconer
To that brave Prince *Alfred*, our present King ;
He has lam'd himself by taking up a Thorn,
Which by my Help he has got rid off now,
But 'till the Wound is heal'd, he shall not leave
My Cottage : Come, walk you in old Friend,
[*Alfred hobbles.*

My Wife is now and then a little pewish ;
But when you've told her a few pleasant Stories,
I make no Doubt, but she'll be better tempered.

[*Exeunt.*



SCENE

SCENE *changes to the Outside of Kinwith-Castle, near Raleigh in Devonshire.*

Enter Odda with several resolute Friends and Soldiers, Augurtha, and Egwina.

Odda. Since the *Danes* are so near, we shan't have Time

To store the Castle, to maintain a Siege :

Augurtha and *Egwina*, take my Shallop,

And cross to *Wales*, Prince *Edward* will receive you,

And make you welcome at King *Madoc's* Court.

Aug. Your Pilot will attend us to *Caermarthen* ?

Odda. He knows the Way, I've often sent him thither.

Egw. Perhaps we may get there before the Prince.

Odda. Hardly ; but if you shou'd, I am well known to *Madoc*,

He will receive you kindly : I'll put you in the Way, Friends ; I will soon be with you.

[Exit with Augurtha and Egwina.]

1st Friend. *[To the Soldiers.]* Cheer up my Boys, *Odda's* as brave a Man

As any of his Age in *Devonshire*.

1st Sold. He has a cool Head and a warm Heart, my Lads.

2d Friend. He knows the Art of War, and several Times,

Has put the *Danes* to Flight.

2d Sold. We'll all stand by him, we can die but once.

Omnes. Huzza——Huzza——Huzza.

Enter Odda.

Odda. I am glad my Friends, to find you in such Courage ; And when I tell you how I think to Act,

You'll

You'll find on that, must be our chief Reliance :
A Packet, I've received from *Ethelred*,
The valiant Earl of *Kent*, who lets me know
The Strength o'the *Danes*, and how 'tis with King
Alfred;

On us, he much depends :—The *Danes* in Foot
Are much Superior ; *Ethelred* in Horse,
With which, he very much annoys their Rear,
But cannot stand a Battle :—Now, I propose,
To shew as large a Front upon this Heath,
As we can make—full Bow Shot from the Castle,
Our Colours at due Distance wav'd behind us,
To make 'em think us deep, as well as broad :
Soon as the *Danes* appear, we will move backward,
But very slow, 'till almost close to the Walls
We'll make a Stand, and from the Right and Left
Gradually enter : Then we'll shut our Gates,
And line our Ramparts, as if we design'd,
To endure a Siege : The Day is so far spent, D
That they will soon incamp.—Now, observe me ;
Just in the Dusk we'll form without the Gates,
And when they are incumber'd with their Tents,
We'll march on silently, no Trumpets sounding,
Till we are almost on 'em : Then our Trumpets
Placed at due Distance (as our Colours were,
When they first saw us) shall begin to sound
A general Attack ; with Sword and Spear
We'll rush upon 'em, only two Men deep
The foremost with our Swords, the hind ones Spears,
Exactly fix'd between.—If the *Danes* are disorder'd,
Ethelred with his Horse, will fall upon 'em :
Then we'll push on, and put 'em to the Rout.

1st Friend. I like your Scheme, and doubt not the
Success.

2d Friend.

2d Friend. Alfred himself, could not contrive it better.

Soldiers. Huzza——Huzza——Odda, for ever.

Odda. But hark, my Friends,—if they should keep
their Ground,

We'll make a Stand; then from the Right and Left,
Wheel off and join in Center; then renew th' Attack,
They'll think us a fresh Line, and not resist us.

1st Friend. So we may do as often as they Stand,
The Spears will keep the Swordsmen safe.

2d Friend. And as our Swords advance, the Spears
must follow.

1st Friend. And does the Earl of Kent, know your
Design?

Odda. I've sent it to him by a little Boy
At Bottom of a Basket, fill'd with Nuts;
And if he meets the *Danes*, I've bid him offer
To sell the Nuts t'em by a little Measure,
He must fill fifty Times to reach the Bottom,

[*Trumpets sound.*

The *Danish* Trumpets, I believe;—let's form
Our Front, and place our Colours to deceive 'em:
We shall have Time to practice the Attack,
Soon as we are retir'd within the Gates.

[*They form the Men and Colours, and retreat near the
Walls in one Line; and from Right and Left, they
gradually enter and shut the Gates.*]

Enter Hubba, Halfdene, Officers, &c.

Hub. I did not think they had so large a Body.

Halfd. Surely, they were drawn up to be review'd?

Hub. No, they were form'd, as if design'd to meet us;
But as we much out number'd 'em, retir'd.

Halfd. If their Castle's well provided, they'll keep
Us here along while at a Stand?

Hub.

Deliverer of his Country. 45

Hub. The Dew begins to fall, pitch every Man his Tent.
[*Whilst they are handling their Tents, the English march out silently, and form a double Line; (the first with Hangers, the last with Spears between 'em; Trumpets sound) the first Assault the Danes stand, the English wheel off to the Right and Left, join, and march up, as before.——Huzza (behind the Scenes) the English drive off the Danes.*] And

Re-enter with Ethelred and Elfreda in Men's Cloaths, Officers, &c.

Ethelr. 'Twas well contriv'd, and bravely executed.

Odda. Thanks to your bold Attack upon their Rear;
But who is this brave Youth?

Ethelr. It's *Elfreda* the Princess, my lov'd Wife,
Firmly resolv'd to share all Dangers with me.

Odda. Was ever such a Heroine?

Enter an Officer with a Standard roll'd up.

Officer. They've left the Heath, and *Hubba* 'mong
the Slain;

But *Halfdene's* Body they have carried off.

Ethelr. Raise a Mount over *Hubba*, he was the
worthiest

Of the three Brothers:—I've lately learn'd,
He was persuaded, we first broke the Peace.

Officer. Their famous Standard *Reafan* here, I've
taken [Displaying it.

The Bearer, lost his Life in it's Defence.

Odda. This Standard was their Oracle;
By *Ivar's* Sisters wove with Magic Art—they now
Will soon disperse, if quickly, we pursue 'em.

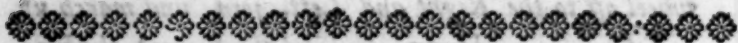
Ethelr. They'll fly to *Guthurm*, if we don't prevent 'em:

Near *Amesbury* incamp'd, I hear they left him.

Odda.

Odda. Bid the Horse harrafs, and impede their Flight
Betimes To-morrow, we will overtake 'em.

Elf. I hope the King, will hear of this Success,
And join us, to compleat our Happiness. [Exeunt.]



A C T IV.

SCENE, *The Inside of the Cottage in Athelney.*

*Alfred in the Chimney Corner bending of Yew for Bows,
and making of Arrows. A Cake at the Fire.*

Alf. CAN *Odda* and *Ethelred* find 'em Employment?
Should they Attack the weakest, *Kintwith-Castle*,
They may spend a Week about it, e'er they take it;
And *Odda* and his Friends, may all Escape
By crossing o'er to *Wales*:—But *Warbam-Castle*
Is now so well supply'd, as not to fear 'em;
If they Attack that first, they'll loose more Time;
If not, our Horse, may harrafs much their Rear.
The *Welch* and *Scots* when join'd, will be superior
To *Guthurm*.—Soon as they come, I'll head 'em:
If I can beat him, 'fore he is rejoin'd;
I then may be an equal Match for all.

Enter Maliba with a Milk-Pail.

Mal. [Looking at the Fire Place.] See! see, how the
Cake is burning; [She turns it,
Odz wooks! one wou'd think, you had no Eyes:
My Husband said, you wou'd be useful to me,
Whilst he was gone to buy lean Stock in *Wales*,

But

But here you waste you Time in cutting Sticks,
And making foolish Bows, not mind the Cake,
'Tho' you'll be glad to eat on't fast enough;
You've a confounded Stomach :—Come, be useful,
Do something for your Living ;—here, help me on
wi' the Pot.

Alf. [*Aside.*] Is this Employment, that a King should
stoop to?

It is, for any circumstanc'd, as I am,
[*Helps her on with the Pot.*]

They're counted mean, who wait upon themselves
In Courts, where many are retain'd to serve :
But in a well fought Field, the most laborious
Stand the best Chance, to merit high Renown.

Mal. Did you look to the Bullocks and the Sheep
This Morning? Did you move the Fold?

Alf. Yes Mistress, that I did, and all were well :
[*Aside.*] Which Labour is no more than Exercise
To string my Nerves, for much more glorious Toil ;
My Hearts in Tune, and only waits the Time,
To swell in Concert, with the Trumpets Sound.

Enter Dunulf.

Mal. O! Husband, I am glad you are return'd ;
You left me, a poor Help-Mate.

Dun. Get me dry Stockings, for I've walk'd all Night
Through the wet Marshes ; these are wringing wet :
Get 'em me quickly, pray do. [*Exit Maliba.*]

Alf. Welcome, good Friend, you've made great
Haste.

Dun. Yes, gracious Liege, because I've had great
Luck ;

I had not gone in *Wales* above five Miles,
Before

48 ALFRED the GREAT;

Before I met an Army in full March;
 I strove to shun 'em, but was seen and taken :
 Being brought before their Leaders, I soon found
 They were your Friends ; there were both your Sons
 With *Madoc* and King *Gregour*, and two Women :
 But what surpriz'd me most, one was my Daughter,
 Conducted by Prince *Edward* : Soon as she saw me,
 She ran, she kneel'd, and ask'd my Blessing.
 I took her in my Arms, I wept, then ask'd her,
 Whether Prince *Edward*, was among their Train ?
 He standing near, came forward, and to her,
 Said, tell me quickly, who this good Man is,
 Whom thus you Honour. She answer'd, "'Tis—
 " My Father—I won't—I can't disown him."
 The Prince advancing took me by the Hand,
 And said, "*Egwina*'s Father, I respect
 " Next to my own."—I was amaz'd, and bow'd ;
 " Your Father, Prince, (said I) commends me to you
 " With Business, for your private Ear."

Alf. My Son is amorous ; perhaps your Daughter,
 May known a Reason for this great Respect :
 But proceed to present Business, ye retir'd.

Dun. Just out of Earshot ; when I imparted to
 him

The whole of your Commission.—Then he call'd
 His Brother to us, and told him all.—And then,
 Concerning *Madoc* and the *Scot*, consulted
 What should be told 'em, as from your Direction.

Alf. Did you hear, what they told 'em ?

Dun. I did, Prince *Edward* ; looking at me, said,
 " That worthy Man, my Father, has intrusted
 " With exact Orders, how we are to Act,
 " Soon as we meet in *England* : But being join'd,

" Part

" Part of his Cautions useleſs, but the reſt
" Are very proper for us to obſerve;
" In *Selwood* Foreſt, is the Place appointed
" For ye to march to:—I'm to go to him,
" That he and I, may join you with ſuch Forces
" As he has got together; but 'till we come,
" He charges you, to let no Trumpets ſound,
" Or give the Enemy the leaſt Alarm."

Alf. So far he ſpoke my Meaning, and did right,
To make 'em think I had ſome Forces with me:
But why? How came the *Scots* to land in *Wales*?

Dun. By an Accident, which brings you better News,
Than all the reſt, you've heard.

Alf. Then quickly, let me know it.

Dun. As they, were turning round the Point of *Wales*
Some of their foremoſt Ships, within the *Severn*
They met a Pinnace, croſſing o'er from *Devon*;
Being in the Night, they almoſt ran her down,
And did her ſo much Damage, they were forc'd
To take the Crew aboard; who being Friends,
Told 'em, they were diſpatch'd by th' Earl of *Drvon*
With certain News to *Madoc* and Prince *Edward*;
That *Odda* had attack'd the *Daniſh* Army,
And with the Aſſiſtance of the Earl of *Kent*
Had put them to the Rout, kill'd both their Generals,
Took their moſt famous Standard *Reaſan* from 'em,
And were purſuing them towards this County,
In th' Evening, ere they came from *Kinwith* Harbour.

Alf. How my Heart bounds within my Breaſt; go on,
For quickly, I muſt re-aſſume myſelf.

Enter Maliba.

Mal. Here are your Stockings, I was forc'd to mend
'em.

D

Dun.

50 ALERED the GREAT;

Dun. Pray *Maliba* go out, we are discoursing
On private Business—

Mal. With him! What private Business can you
have,
That I may n't hear?

Alf. It is no Matter, if she knows me now;
Proceed and tell me how they came together.

Dun. Hearing Prince *Edward* was in *Wales* with
Madoc,

Your Son persuaded *Gregour* there to Land
With him, and let the Vessels keep their Course
To *Cardiff Point*, and wait 'em from *Caermarthen*:
Soon as Prince *Edward* knew of *Odda's* Victory,
He press'd King *Madoc* strait to march his Troops
And join the friendly *Scots* on Board their Transports;
They did; but if the Wind hadn't favour'd us,
We shou'd been too thick stow'd: but safe are landed
At *Evelmouth*, and on their March for *Selwood*.

Alf. But where's my Son? why did he not come
with you?

Dun. He agreed his Brother, should conduct the
Forces;

And charg'd him, not to give the least Alarm,
Or march thro' any Town: Himself he said
Would lodge the Ladies in a Place of Safety,
And then would find you out. My Daughter said
To me in private, they were to come hither.

Mal. Hey Day! Princes and Ladies, and I don't
know who all:

What has his Sons, or your Daughter to do with them?

Dun. *Maliba* know—this is King *Alfred's* Self,
Who in Disguise has honour'd our poor Cottage.

Mal.

Deliverer of his Country. 51

Mal. [*Kneeling.*] God bless your Majesty, and grant
me Pardon

For all the Faults, my Ignorance committed.

Alf. [*Raising her.*] Pray rise, I do forgive you heartily,
And hope henceforward, you will mend your Temper.

Enter Prince Edward, Augurtha, and Egwina.

Edw. Where is my Royal Father : [*Looking about.*]

Who my Liege, [*Kneeling.*]

Besides your Son, could find out this Disguise ?

Alf. [*Raising him.*] Pray Son, who are these Ladies ?

Edw. [*Presenting Augurtha.*] This is the Countess of
Devon, to whose Care

The Queen, my Mother, first committed me ;

[*She kneels, Alfred raises and salutes her.*]

For which alone my Gratitude is due ;

But since she has done me a signal Favour,

By introducing me to this dear Lady,

[*Presenting Egwina.*]

Whose Beauty first made Conquest of my Heart,

Her Favour next in Gratitude oblig'd me

To offer my Protection, to supply

The Loss of her own Friends ; but now good Chance,

Has reconcil'd her to her Father's Love ;

The same good Man, under whose friendly Roof,

Your Majesty has found a safe Azylum :

Let me commend her, to your Royal Favour.

[*She kneels.*]

Alf. [*Raises and salutes her.*] Fair Lady, rest secure,

in both our Favours :

She is well born : This Man's of noble Blood,

[*Pointing to Dunulf.*]

D 2

But

But lost his Patrimony in *East Angles* :
 Since when, he being versed in rural Sports,
 Became my Falkner, and since by my Gift
 Enjoy'd this Cottage, join'd to so much Land,
 Which kept him free from further Obligations.

Mal. [*Aside.*] No wonder, she despises Country
 Work ;

A Distaff is not fit for her nice Fingers.

Alf. Ladies, please to retire ; Affairs of State,

Exeunt Women.

Must now engage us :—Son, I'd have you haste
 To find out *Ethelred*, he must be near
 In his Pursuit o' the *Danes* tow'rd *Ambersbury*,
 Where their main Body, under *Guthurm* lies ;
 Bid him quit the Pursuit, and go with you
 To *Selwood-Forest* ; when join'd, do you
 Take the Command, march quietly to *Warminster*,
 There keep a Horse and Armour ready for me,
 And I will head you soon as I've discern'd
 The Numbers, and Position of the *Danes*.

Edw. How can your Majesty safely observe 'em,
 Unless some of our Horse come and attend you ?

Alf. It is contriv'd———but
 If I should fail to come, before a Battle offers,
 You and your Friends, act as becomes your Glory.

[*Exit Edward.*]

Dun. Will your Majesty accept of better Cloaths ?
 I have a Suit, will fit you.

Alf. No *Dunulf*, can you get me a *Welch-Harp* ?

Dun. I have one, but I fear, 'tis out of Tune.

Alf. No Matter, if it has got all it's Strings :
 But further, have you two good Horses ?
 If they're rough coated, they will do the better,
 So as they have but Speed.

Dun.

Dun. I've two as good as ever trod the Road ;
They are not very smooth, but are sure footed,
And very fleet: Who are to ride 'em ?

Alf. You and myself ; but let me see the Harp,
And I will tell you more of my Design.

Dun. It's hung up in the inner Room ; I'll fetch it.

Alf. No, let us go and look on't there.

Dun. This Way, an't please your Majesty. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *changes to Sedgemore in Somersetshire.*

Enter Odda, Ethelred, Elfeda, and their Officers.

Odda. Halt—they're quite got o'er the Moor.

Ethelr. As they are double, we might yet o'ertake
'em.

Odda. No, let us stop—*Gutburn* may march to
join 'em ;

And if he should, they'll make a better Stand,
Than that near *Exton*.

Ethelr. That cost 'em dear, for almost all their Foot
Were slain, except the few their Horse took up.

Elf. As all the Country round flock in to join us,
'Tis strange, we can't get Tidings of the King,
I fear he's met ill Chance in his Disguise.

Ethelr. Your Fears are just or else he wou'd appear ;
The News of our Success he must have heard :
But who comes here ?

Odda. A single Man, but see he makes to our Horse :
He is a Friend ;—he alights, and comes towards us ;
It may be *Alfred*.

Elf. No, he seems too young for him ;—but 'tis
My Brother *Edward*.

Enter Edward.

Edw. I should have miss'd you, if I had not met
Your wounded Men coming to *Bridgewater*.

Ethelr. How many were they?

Edw. Only Twelve; and they I think were few,
Considering the many *Danes* you've kill'd.

Who's this, *Elfeda*? [*Embracing her.*] Welcome to
my Arms,

My little Hero! Thou art more than Woman.

Elf. Dear Brother, can you tell us any News
About the King, I fear my Father's dead.

Edw. No, he is well, and but a few Miles off;
He bid me find you out, and give you Orders.

Odda. They come in Time, for we were at a Loss;
I thought further Pursuit was dangerous.

Edw. His Orders are, you shou'd quit the Pursuit
Forthwith, to *Selwood-Forest* march and join
The *Welch* and *Scots*, led there by *Ethelward*.

Odda. I am surpris'd, they shou'd be join'd so soon:
How came the *Scots*, to know of our Success?

Edw. The Pinnance you sent to me, ran foul of 'em;
Ethelward and *Gregour*, brought the News to us;
Crouding the *Welch* aboard the *Scotish* Transports,
We all came o'er together: I have much more
To tell you, but the Time will not permit.

Elf. Where did you leave my Father, and with
whom?

Edw. With *Odda's* worthy Lady, and another,
Who, I suppose, he's told you somewhat of.

Elf. He has; I wish the Lady well, and hope
You'll pay her Confidence with Gratitude.

Edw. If I should not, may all the World detest me!

Elf.

Elfr. But where? Where is my Father *Alfred*?

Edw. He's at her Father's Cottage, and has there
In *Athelney* lain hid in mean Disguise.

Ethelr. A Cottage, say you, pray explain yourself.

Edw. It's but a Cottage, but the Master of it
Was nobly born, and has done him great Service;
'Twas by his Toil and Care, we found my Father.

Odda. As he's so near, will not King *Alfred* lead us?

Edw. No, he charg'd me, when all are join'd to-
gether

To take th' Command, and march to *Warminster*;
There he will meet us, soon as he's observ'd,
The Strength and Situation of the *Danes*.

Ethelr. How can he do so, without our light Horse?

Edw. He said, he had contriv'd it—paus'd—at last,
These Words he spoke; “ Son, if a Battle offers,
“ And I should fail to come——
“ You and your Friends, act as becomes your Glory.”

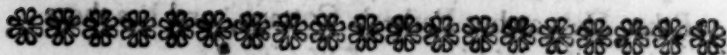
Elfr. I know my Father's wife and resolute,
Careful or hazardous of his own Person,
According as the general Good requires,
And therefore has prepar'd us 'gainst the worst;
Let us be careful to observe his Orders,
And trust to Providence for the Success.

Odda. Let us return to the Troops: Prince *Edward*,
now

You shall begin; take th' Command upon you.

Edw. No, not 'till at *Selwood*, when we all are join'd.

Ethelr. It must be now, for we have both resign'd.
[*Exeunt.*]



A C T V.

SCENE, *The Danish Camp on Salisbury-Plain,
near Edington in Wiltshire.*

Enter Guthurm with his Officers and Colours.

Guth. **H**ERE pitch our Tents, we'll stay near *Edington,*

'Till we can be more certain what Success
Our Countrymen will have; no Troops to oppose 'em,
But what are in the Castles; one of them weak,
The other well provided: There the gallant *Godrun*
By Treach'ry lost his Life; if that they cannot take,
They may blockade:—And as for *Alfred*,
He and his Sons, they say, are fled to *Rome*:
But who are these, come with such Speed?
They're Friends; I'll meet 'em. *[Exit.*

1st Officer. Why do we not march forward?

2d Officer. Because these Countries, would call in the
Welch;

But being here, we keep 'em all in Awe.

Re-enter Guthurm with Anand and Ofcytel.

Anand. Pursued, and all our Foot are cut to Pieces,
Except the few, which we bro't off behind us.

Guthurm. Where are your Generals?

Ofcytel. Both slain:—The Gods have quite for-
sook us,

For we have lost our Guide, the Standard *Reafan*.

Guthurm.

Guthurm. How can it be; I thought you'd so much Power,

That the *English* durst not look you in the Face.

Anand. We thought so too: thought only *Warham-Castle*,

Provided to withstand us:—As for *Kinwith*,
We thought we had only to appear before it,
To give the Summons, and have it surrender'd.

Ofeytel. In that we err'd, for they had got together,
A Force sufficient, almost to withstand us;
Upon the Heath, they seem'd to be in Doubt,
Whether they should not meet and give us Battle.

Anand. When they retir'd within their Walls, our
Foot

Began to pitch their Tents; we were in most Concern,
How to defend the Rear, for *Ethelred*
With all his Horse, four Times our Number,
Had much annoy'd us in our March from *Exeter*.

Ofeytel. But just at Dusk, the Garrison march'd
out,

And without Noise, attack'd with Sword and Spear
Our Front, incumber'd with their Tents:
We stood the Shock;—but soon another came,
Which put our Foot in such Disorder,
They ran among our Horse:—Then *Ethelred*,
Join'd by a Youth, we never saw before,
Wi' his Troops fell on, and put us to the Rout;
Their Horse pursu'd us, 'till it was quite Dark,
And their Foot follow'd, soon as it was Light.

Guthurm. What did you make no Stand? Could not
you rally?

Anand.

Anand. Not till we came to the River; there our
Foot

Came up, we pass'd, and made a Stand at *Exton*;
But had not Time to form, before they cross'd
Upon our Rear, and made, a dismal Carnage.

Guthurm. How far, did they pursue you afterwards?

Ofcyltel. We have not seen 'em, since we pass'd
Sedgemore.

Guthurm. Was it only their Horse, pursued you?

Ofcyltel. Their Foot came up at *Exton*.

Guthurm. Are we superior to 'em, now we are
join'd?

Anand. Double at least in Foot, but not in Horse;
But in the whole, we much out number 'em.

Guth. To-morrow then, I am resolv'd to fight 'em,
If they dare stand their Ground;—to-day,
Let us refresh our Men, conceal our Loss,
And look as chearful as we can:—

Enter Alfred in his Disguise, with a Welch-Harp.

What poor old Fellow's that,
Who limps along, and tunes some Instrument?

Ofcyltel. Come hither Friend, who are you?

Alf. [*Hobbling forward and bowing low.*] A poor
Welch Harpur, please you;

Tavid's so dim; hur cannot see to Work;

Put hur can play, King *Arthur's* warlike Tunes,
And sing you *Pallads* of King *Vortigern*;
Of poth their *Pattles*, with the cruel *Saxons*.

Guthurm. Can you so Friend, there's Money for you;
Go and divert the Soldiers in their Tents;
We'll come and hear you play.

[*Exit Alfred hobbling nimbly.*

Anand.

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Anand. Some of those *Welchmen*, play exceeding well :

I've heard some of their Songs ; they're true to Story.

Oscytel. The *North Welch* to this Day, abhor the
Saxons.

Guthurm. Let us go hear him. [Exeunt,

Enter Dunulf.

Dunulf. I've tied the Horses to a Thicket yonder ;
I'll watch him so, that he shan't loose his Way,
In coming from them.——
Good—how they beckon him from Tent to Tent ;
He hobbles on, and passes very quick
Through all their Camp : The Generals follow,
But do not quite come up to him ;—he bows,
And catches Money in his Hat ;—he moves
This Way so fast, they will suspect him ;—but now
He's clear o'th' Tents, he stands and plays
A farewell Tune :—If he gets off, he'll sound
Another Sort of Musick in their Ears,
They will not like so well :—He bows,
And takes his Leave so well in antick Tricks,
They think it is his Humour :—Now he skips
Just like a Magpye from 'em, whilst they hold
Their Sides, I guess with Laughter :—He's just here,
And almost out their Sight.—Here, here, this Way.

Enter Alfred ambling.

Alf. Where are the Horses, quickly let me mount,
I've plaid the Fool among 'em, 'till I'm tired. [Exeunt

Enter Guthurm, Anand, and Oscytel.

Guthurm. He's quite hopp'd out of Sight.

Oscytel.

Oscytel. I never saw so humourous an old Fellow.

Anand. He strung his Harp exceeding well.

Guthurm. Could you distinguish any Thing he sung?

Oscytel. 'Twas much about King *Vortigern* and *Arthur*;

With Promises due to the old *British* Valour:

But his Motion was so quick, bowing from Tent to Tent,

I could not put three Words of it together.

Anand. One of the Songs he sung, I've heard before.

Oscytel. Can you remember any of the Words?

Anand. Yes, I believe, I can repeat the whole.

Guthurm. Pray give us the Tune with it, if you can?

Anand. I'll try.

S O N G.

I.

COME if you dare, the Tr——umpet sounds;

Come if you dare, the Fa——es rebound;

We come, we co——me,

Says the double, double Beat, of the thundering Drum:

Now we charge all amain,

They fully——again;

The Gods from above our Labour behold,

And pity Mandkind, that will quarrel for Gold.

II.

The fainting Saxons qu——it their Ground,

Their Trumpets languish i——n their Sound;

They

They fly, they fly———,

Victoria, Victoria, the bold Britons cry:

Now the Victory's won,

To the Plunder we run;

We'll return to our Lasses like fortunate Traders,

And tri——umph in Spite of the vanquish'd Invaders.

Guthurm. I thank you much, 'tis a bold martial Song.

Anand. The old Fellow sung it too much thro' his Nose;
But for the Tune, 'twas never better play'd.

Guth. And when he had return'd thro' the last Line,
With how much Nimbleness he fac'd the Middle;
And at a Distance, play'd a farewell Tune,
For to return us Thanks.

Anand. I thought I should have split my Sides a
Laughing,

To see how comically he hopp'd off.

Guthurm. That Hop is now, become his natural Step;
I don't think any of us cou'd run so fast,
If we were forc'd to carry a Harp in Hand:
I don't believe I could?

Anand. Nor I?

Oscytel. Nor I, I'm sure?

Guthurm. Come, let us now, the Soldier's Arms
examine,

That we may march at break of Day to-morrow. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Ethelred, Elfreda, and Odda.

Ethelred. About to the Left, march with the Horse,
And we will soon come to you;
Let's post ourselves, so as to take their Flank,
When *Alfred* and his Sons attack their Front.

Elfreda.

62 ALFRED the GREAT;

Elfreda. How far are they behind?

Odaa. A very little Way.

Ethelred. *Alfred* would not Alarm 'em, 'till they see him.

Elfreda. They little think how very near he is.

Odaa. Let's to our Post, he's almost here.

[They cross at the lower End of the Stage.]

Enter Alfred, Edward, Ethelward, Dunulf, Gregour, Madoc, Officers, and Trumpets.

The English Standards, a Golden Lion, and a Red Cross, painted over the Danish Raven: The Welch Standard, a Harp; the Scottish, a Green Cross.

Alf. I see the Horse are taking Post according to my

Orders:

Sound an Attack, they'll quickly see our Horse,

[Trumpets sound.]

If we do not Alarm 'em first.

Madoc. They run to Arms, like Pees disturb'd.

Gregour. Let us gang up and set their Heves on Fire.

Enter Guthurm, Anand, Ofsytel, Officers, and Colours.

Guthurm. *Alfred* himself!—We own you have surpris'd us;

But you will find us ready to repell,

This cowardly Attack.

Alf. Ye Treaty Breakers, think not to escape
The heavy Punishment, your Crimes deserve.

Guthurm.

Guthurm. May Treaty Breakers meet their Punishment,

We pray the Gods: Stand firm, my valiant *Danes*.

[The English attack the Danes; they resist 'till Olsctel and Anand fall; then the rest give Way, and are drove off by the English.] [Trumpets flourish without.

Re-enter the Danes, running cross the lower End of the Stage; and after them, Ethelred, Elfreda, Odda, Ethelward, Madoc, Gregour, and English Officers.

Enter Alfred and Edward.

Edward. We have routed 'em, I think;
They were most desperate, where we engaged,
No Quarter would they take: Are you not wounded,
Sir?

Alf. No, 'tis only a Scratch.

Edward. Our Men were hardly, after such warm
Work

Of hewing down so many desperate *Danes*,
To be restrain'd from joining the Pursuit.

Alf. There are sufficient Numbers after them.

Edward. The Horse quite broke 'em, and are in
their Rear.

Alfred. *Ethelward* with his Foot, the *Scotch* and
Welch,

Are emulous, who shall be foremost.

Edward. They all behav'd with Bravery in the
Charge,

We made upon 'em after the first Onset.

Enter Ethelward.

Alf. Well Son! where have you left 'em!

Ethelward.

Etheiward. We have drove 'em fairly into Tru-
bridge-Castle;

Their Horſe had ſeiz'd it; their Foot upon the Bridge,
Made a bold Stand, and would have ſtop'd us there;
But *Odda* quickly, down the River Side,
Found out a Place, he ſaid, his Horſe cou'd ſwim:
In plung'd, my Siſter next, then *Ethelred*,
And all the Horſe, but one, got ſafely over.

Alfred. I think, my Daughter, ſtrives to brave you
all:

Did not they quit the Bridge, at ſeeing this?

Etheiward. Finding the Horſe wou'd flank 'em,
they retir'd
Into the Caſtle, looſing very few,
On quitting of the Bridge.

Enter Odda.

Alf. Odda, we thank you, for your ready Thought,
And for the Service you have lately done:
I add to your Title, Earl of *Somerſet*.

Odda. [*Kiſſing Alfred's Hand.*] I humbly thank your
Majeſty:

Our Horſes did n't ſwim above a Yard
Or two, juſt in the Middle of the Stream.

Alf. Well, what can they do in the Caſtle,
There's not Proviſion there to ſerve ſo many,
They muſt ſurrender ſoon.

Odda. *Gutharm*, ſo ſoon, as he ſecur'd 'em all
Within the Gates—deſir'd a Parly with us;
By Trumpets Sound—*Ethelred* and I advanced;
And he came out—told us, he had discover'd

Too late, you justly had upbraided them
With Breach of Peace: That *Hubba* and himself
Were both deceiv'd by *Anand's* false Report
Of that Assault, in which you lost your Son.
He says, the Perpetrators of that Action
Have, every one of them, met with the Fate
Of such vile Crimes, or else he does declare
He would impale, or send them to meet Justice,
From your own Vengeance. As for himself,
He says, he fears not Death; but for the Sake
Of those are with him there, he will accept
Such honourable Terms, as you will grant:
But if you treat them still, as Infidels;
They'll sell their Lives, as dearly as they can.

Alfred. This Explanation, does bespeak him worthy

Of generous Treatment: — Tell him, they're in my
Power,

And could not hope, to 'scape my just Revenge,
For breaking of the Peace, and my Son's Death;
But as he does disclaim the Name of Infidel,
If he, and those with him, will be baptiz'd
In Christian Faith, they may remain my Subjects,
Secure in their Possessions and Acquirements;
But those, who do not chuse to be made Christians,
On these Conditions, may depart this Island;
Who by their Gods shall swear, they never more
Will set their Foot on *British* Shore again.

Odda. Your Majesty shall very quickly know,
If they accept your gracious Terms of Peace.

[Exit.

E

Alf.

Alf. Now Sons, as I shall make this Island free,
I hope, when I am dead, you'll keep it so,
And not infringe my Subjects Liberty:

Edward, my next Successor; be you careful,
To gain their Love, and to deserve their Praise;
And you, Son *Ethelward*, think it your Duty,
To love and serve your Brother, as your King;
Be you a bright Example to his Subjects,
Teach them their Duty, shew 'em you'll deserve
The many Honours, he'll bestow upon you.

Edw. Long may you live to make your Subjects
happy;
Your Precepts constantly, shall be my Rule,
And always hope, to keep my Brother's Friendship.

Ethelw. I wish ye both long Life: each reign in
Peace;

I'll strive to be your most deserving Subject,
And not disgrace, the Honours ye bestow.

Alf. I hope you will;—and now go take the Charge,
From *Warham* hither, to conduct the Queen.

[*Exit Ethelward.*

Edw. These Compacts may restrain the *Danes* you've
conquer'd,

And those already settled in your Kingdom;
But difficult it may be, to prevent
Another Swarm of such devouring Locusts,
From landing on your Coasts in Time to come.

Alf. That next must be our Care, to guard against
Future Invasions; we'll have always ready
A powerful Fleet to attack all Ships of Force
With Transports, daring to approach our Coasts:

When

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When we become a People so united,
As by one Faith; I hope, we soon shall be
Free from intestine Wars; we may defy
The *Danes*, or any other potent Neighbours:
So we preserve the *Scotch*, and *Welch* our Friends,
And by *Northumbria*, keep 'em both asunder:
But Son be jealous, never lose an Inch
Of that same Barrier.

Edw. But if the *Welch* or *Scotch*, should fall out
with us,
Our Shipping then, will do but little Service.

Alf. If in our naval Force, we are superior,
As we may doubly be, to both of them:
'Twill then be in our Power, to subdue
The first that would inroach on our Dominions,
And keep the other off from their Assistance.

Enter Ethelred and Elfreda.

Elfr. Victory follow'd by Peace ever attend

[*Kneels to Alfred, he raises and embraces her.*

My Royal Father; may his Enemies,
As now, being doubly vanquish'd, by his Mercy
Renounce their Errors, and become his Subjects.

Edw. Now by your Leave, I'll fetch our Friends
from *Athelney*.

[*Exit.*

Alfr. Then they accept my Terms: Do all turn
Christians?

Ethelr. No, Royal Sir; but *Guthurm*, thirty Officers,
And most Part of the rest, will be baptiz'd:
Those who persist to keep their Heathen Worship,

Swear by their Gods, they'll ne'er molest us more,
And be forthwith transported back to *Denmark*.

Elfa. For the Performance of these Articles,
The Earl of *Devon* has got in his Power
Half *Guthurm's* Officers, and all the Arms
Of them, who won't turn Christians.

Alf. For the good Services you both have done,
Ethelred, I create you, Earl of *Mercia*,
With Power to you, your Wife, and her Descendants,
To exercise there all the Royalties
Of me, and my Successors.

[*They both kiss Alfred's Hand*.
Prepare for *London*, there we will instate you.

Enter Odda and Dunulf with Guthurm.

Guthurm. Your Teachers have convinc'd me of my
Errors,

And most of us, are now very desirous
To be baptiz'd; I beg you'll honour me
With a new Name, and let the solemn Act,
Be soon perform'd, within your Royal Presence.

Alf. As the most noble of the *Danish* Converts.
I'll name you • *Ethelstan*. The Ceremony,
Soon as the *Queen* arrives, we will attend.

Enter Edward, Augurtha, and Egwina.

Odda, receive your Lady *Somerfet*.

[*Odda embraces Augurtha*.

Egwina welcome; *Dunulf*, I'll restore you

T.

• Vide the *Saxon* Etymology.

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To all your former Fortunes, and increase 'em.

[*They all bow to Alfred.*]

Enter Queen Alswitha and Ethelward.

My Queen is come to crown the Joys of Peace.

[*Embracing her,*

Q. Alfw. Grant Heaven! our Happiness, may ne'er decrease.

Alfred. Let all my Subjects at their Homes with Cheer,

The first of *August* keep, in every Year:

From Age to Age, may they continue free;

And this be still the Day, mark'd out for Liberty.



F I N I S.

EPILOGUE.

To be spoken by Elfreda in Man's Apparel.

LADIES, you see us all alive and happy,
Except the wicked few, who broke the Treaty,
And poor Prince Edmund; but he died so glorious,
We almost envy him, tho' we're victorious:
Hubba and Halfdene, lost their Lives like Fools,
They shou'd have heard both Sides, and not been Tools:
To three adventurous Knaves, who for the Plunder,
Took Castles by Surprise, so far asunder.
Perhaps some here, may think my Part too bold,
And hardly can believe, our Dames of old
Would quit their Petticoats, and put on Breeches,
Or risk their Lives;—but they were cunning Witches.
Breeches they wore, and very oft wou'd rent 'em;
And who, besides their Husbands, would prevent 'em?
But Raillery apart, the History,
Which furnishes the Matter of this Play,
Makes Alfred's Daughter brave, as may be seen,
If you'll please to consult Monsieur Rapin;
She fought by her Husband's Side, but made a Vow,*
Such as few married Women can keep now:
Supported thus, by History I stand,
And over Mercia's Kingdom had command.
Britons, we don't presume, to give you Laws,
But gladly shall accept, your kind Applause.

* Vide Rapin's History, Folio 98.

ERRATA.

IN the Dramatis Personæ, instead of *Aswald*, read *Dunulf*.
Page 30, the last Line but one, instead of *Crown*, read
Court.—Page 40, Line 8, instead of *Arts*, read Arts.—Page
41, the last Line but two, instead of *peevish*, read peevish.—
Page 52, Line 5, instead of *Which*, read *Hæ*.—Page 55, the
last Line but one, dealee the Word *when*.—Page 60, Line 6,
instead of *Promiss*, read *Praise*.

